

## "RUN FOR YOUR VERY LIVES!!!"

### **Wildly Popular Teachers YOU should AVOID like the Plague!**

By Pastor Terry L. Reese, Valley GBC of Armagh, PA; 5/17/24

Note: As *always*, the “hills are alive”—with heretics! And our people fail to discern. In this survey, I limit myself to what I perceive as the present needs of the people. The spate of false teachers listed below meet the following criteria: 1) a presently high level of *popularity*, and 2) a certain level of *respectability* within the evangelical mainstream. In short, they represent a present and insufficiently apprehended danger that others may not. For this reason, the “usual suspects” typically dealt with in studies like this (e.g., Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland) have been set aside.

**John (and Lisa) Bevere:** Wildly popular and outrageously self-aggrandizing author/lecturer (e.g., the “hero” of all of his colorful personal anecdotes) who is associated or strongly allied with various *Word-Faith* / “*name-it-and-claim-it*” ministries (e.g., Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer, Bill Johnson’s Bethel Church). Bevere *strongly* advocates minimizing Bible doctrine (“*it’s divisive!*”) and promotes ecumenicalism. Unlike most speakers of this genre, Bevere is dangerously smooth & reasonable in tone—and yet, he is involved in “*deliverance ministry*” extremes. He claims, for example, that Satan can, under certain circumstances, have “legal rights” over genuine, Spirit-indwelt Christians—who can actually become DEMON POSSESSED (*a falsehood*). In his teaching, Bevere heavily relies upon extrabiblical revelations and experiences.

**Sarah Young:** Originator of the entire *Jesus Calling* mega-franchise—which, in turn, was based upon the channeled New Age “classic” *God Calling* (a fact that is downplayed by publisher Thomas Nelson—“*a name you can trust!*”). In a meditative state, Young received a series of supposed messages from “Jesus”—which are in reality a series of extrabiblical quotations from a false Christ (Matt. 24:23-24), or “another Jesus” (2Cor. 11:4)—that are were compiled by Young as *Jesus Calling*. Despite the claim that these mystical words were infallibly spoken by the Divine Christ, these “revelations” were *altered & edited* for later editions of the book!!! Despite the testimony of 2Tim. 3:16-17, Young believed (*died 2023*) that the Bible is no longer sufficient for us, and that a more personal, *direct* revelation from God is therefore necessary.

**Beth Moore:** Best-selling author, Bible-teacher—and all-around “gal pal” to zillions of Christian ladies (the central fan base). An outspoken activist for *egalitarianism* in ministry (i.e., female pastors), she created a huge ruckus when she noisily left the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) over the issue and rebranded herself as an Anglican (despite wide doctrinal differences between

the two groups). Over the past quarter-century, the perky and entertaining Ms. Moore has succeeded in teaching an entire generation of American women how to mishandle the Word of God *via* her insufferably shoddy *hermeneutics* (i.e., methods of Biblical interpretation). Employing medieval Roman Catholic methods of interpretation (including extreme allegorization and mystical-contemplative prayer), Moore has offered some highly novel interpretations of the Word of God over the years—and most seriously, *has instructed others to follow in her example*. For example, the story of the Gadarene Demoniac living amongst the *tombs* (Mark 5:3) is NOT a spiritual allegory focusing upon our need to bury our bad memories and move forward! But this is all too representative of Moore’s cavalier incompetence in handling Scripture. Often, however, she doesn’t even bother to expound upon a particular text, making her personal experiences or alleged communications from God the basis of exposition. In terms of her *theological orientation*, Moore is the consummate self-loving sentimental *humanist*—as seen in the recent vitriolic tirade that she unleashed on Twitter against the great Puritan revivalist, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), for his godly emphasis upon the magnitude of human depravity and the holiness of God. In her shallow critique of Edwards’ preaching, Moore insists that Jesus died for us because we’re WORTH IT—thereby demonstrating her complete inability to grasp the Bible’s basic concept of GRACE: *Grace is God’s UNMERITED favor upon UNWORTHY sinners!* Further, Moore has progressively adopted definite *Charismatic tendencies*, with persistent claims that God “*talks*” to her. Moore has also taken a decidedly hard-left turn in favor of the WOKISM, as seen in her subtle retreat from formerly expressed objections to the “gay” lifestyle, and in her increasing bitter expressions of rage directed towards politically conservative Christians. A word to our sisters: Beth is not your “*bestie*”—she’s your *theological nightmare!*

**Rick Warren:** As author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Warren is the *Apostle of mass marketing* (a.k.a, the *Church Growth Movement*, or “*McChurch*,” which sees God’s Church as a *business*), as well as the *Apostle of easy-believism* (i.e., salvation without discussing sin or repentance), and is further noted for his inoffensive and vapid “Walmart” style of preaching. Indeed, people have testified to sitting under Warren for *years* without ever once hearing a solid Gospel presentation! Unlike Joel Osteen (with whom he shares these qualities), Warren has somehow managed to sneak under the radar and retain an inexplicably high level of respectability

amongst conservative evangelicals. In recent years, Warren has increasingly emphasized lefty “*social justice*,” and has a long track-record in embracing *ecumenicalism*—professing to be a “huge fan” of Rome’s left-leaning “hippy pope,” Francis. Warren’s multicampus Saddleback megachurch was rightly thrown out of the Southern Baptist Convention last year for irregularly ordaining female pastors. Rick protested this decision on the Convention’s floor, arrogantly trumpeting the great size of his church and their vast number of baptisms. The SBC was apparently unimpressed!

**The “Heavenly Tourism” Fad:** *Heaven is for Real, 90 Minutes in Heaven*, etc., *ad nauseum*. Fortunately, this genre isn’t as big as it was five years ago—but these books are still out there! ALL of these “beyond-and-back” books that offer new “revelations” of what Heaven is “really like” stand in open denial of Heb. 9:27. *The great harm*: these books train Christians to look to experiences—rather than the Scriptures—as the final source of truth & authority.

**Joel & Victoria Osteen:** The Osteens of the gigantic Lakewood megachurch (average weekly attendance: 45,000!!!) are *BIG Business*: NY Times best-selling books, their own Sirius Radio Network, podcasts, television, etc. Joel is soft on gays, soft on Mormonism, soft on sin, soft on...EVERYTHING. He offers *no saving Gospel*, consciously *refusing* to preach that there is either sin to be repented of, or a Hell to be shunned—thus promoting *easy-believism*: Heaven is achieved by mouthing a meaningless prayer without any substantial content. He *does*, however, forcefully advocate the error of *positive confession* (i.e., “name-it-and-claim-it” theology: physical healing is supposedly a guaranteed provision of the Atonement that is ready to be “claimed”). Thus, it’s always your fault if you haven’t “claimed” your healing & prosperity, and if you aren’t healthy & wealthy like Joel & Victoria! The worldliness of their message is seen in the sad titles of their miserable earth-bound books: *Your Best Life Now* and *Love Your Life*. Silly, silly me: I thought that the coming *Kingdom of our Lord* is our *best life*, and that Matt. 10:39 & John 12:25 were still operative!

**“Bishop” T.D. Jakes:** WHEN will the God’s People stop being conned by slicksters who don’t even adhere to the *bare basics* of *historic Christian orthodoxy*? For the record, “Bishop” Jakes (once hailed by some as the “new Billy Graham”) is only recognized as a “Bishop” by a *Oneness* (i.e., anti-Trinitarian) *cult* that claims that there is only ONE Person in the Godhead. To this day, Jakes refuses to cease from referring to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

as “*manifestations*” (classic Oneness terminology)—but cleverly and dishonestly claims (when speaking to naïve, book-buying evangelicals) that this is simply just a matter of “semantics.”

**Tommy Tenney**: The popular author of the *God Chasers* is yet another Oneness-Doctrine con man! Like T.D. Jakes, Tenney fraudulently downplays his anti-Trinitarian Oneness background in order to court popularity (and coax *dollars*) from naïve, uninformed evangelicals. We give the man *credit*—he’s doing a *good job* of it!

**Steven Furtick**: Hoodie-garbed, muscle-bound, and “super-cool,” this zany and wildly entertaining “hipster” is pastor of the multi-campus *Elevation Church* (a megachurch noted for its trendy, contemporary Christian music). *Elevation Church*, incidentally, recently withdrew from the SBC in the aftermath of the Rick Warren-controversy over female pastors (Furtick’s wife serves as his co-pastor). Steven is noted for his “novel” interpretations of the Bible, in which he sees all manner of “cool new truths” within the passages that were hidden unto others—“*cool new truths*” that *simply AREN’T THERE!!!* Frankly, being as charitable as I can, Furtick is one of the most simple-minded, childish, & sophomoric pulpiteers I have ever had the misfortune to observe in my entire life—and yet, he has a staggering **3.1 MILLION** subscribers on YouTube!!! Question: “*Is evangelicalism doomed, or what?*”

**Andy Stanley**: Heretic son of the late Charles Stanley who is noted for promoting *antinomianism* (i.e., the idea that believers are “unbound” and “unshackled” by the observance of any moral or legal code). This is witnessed in his obsessive support for the full acceptance and normalization of the “Gay Christian.”

**Frank Viola & George Barna**. These two have written one of the most absurd and arrogant Christian tomes to appear in YEARS: *Pagan Christianity*. Sadly, its thesis has gained traction in some circles. According to Viola—the self-styled champion of the “new reformation”—any imposition of *structure, order, or innovation* with reference to the local church is to be disdained as a “pagan” intrusion. Church buildings, ordered worship services, ordained clergy & recognized leadership, formal sermons, choirs, Sunday Schools, formal pastoral training... *all of these* are somehow “pagan” and/or “unbiblical.” Only anarchic, leaderless House Churches that subscribe to Viola’s brand of “open,” “participatory” ministry meet with approval. The co-author, Barna, has a sorry record of falling for just about every evangelical “fad” for *decades*.